

TOWN OF OAK BLUFFS  
DOWNTOWN STREETSCAPE MASTER PLAN COMMITTEE  
September 23, 2014

MEETING MINUTES

BOARD MEMBERS:

Brian Packish, Chair  
Doug Abdelnour  
Amy Billings  
Chuck Sullivan  
Erik Albert  
John Bradford

ATTENDEES:

Craig Lowe MVCMA  
Christine Flynn (MVC Staff)  
Bill Giordano  
Maura McGroarty

The meeting of the Downtown Streetscape Master Plan Committee was called to order by Chairman, Brian Packish at 1:10 PM in the Town Hall Meeting Room at 56 School Street in Oak Bluffs, MA.

Brian Packish: I would like to attempt to accomplish today, based on my conversation with John Ford and reading from the same email as last week there are particular important items regarding their idea of the process and moving forward:

1. Review and accept the market study and the results of the survey and public visioning process
2. Review and refine the Calibrated Project Goals (which is the email just distributed)
3. Select a Way Finding Sub-Committee to work directly with John Seeley in Surface Manner Design
4. Review the big picture, preliminary Design Concepts we presented relative to the project goals defined by the group

Discussion:

Brian Packish: Last week there were a few in the group who were not ready to accept the results of the survey yet. There is over 70 pages Are we in a place to accept?

Brian Packish: Is there some form of payment associated with payment of this particular phase of the study. Is there a motivation for this market study to be accepted?

Bob Whritenour Not directly related to the payment. There are three phases to this project – we have completed and paid for Phase 1; their coming over and the outreach., the Survey – opinions of the 542 residents responses. They did what we asked. No problem accepting the results. The bigger question; what do we do with the recommendations accepted? That is a lot more room for discussion.

Brian Packish I personally do not have any issues with it either.

Amy Billings: It is what we asked for, believes we've covered everything.

Bob Whritenour We are not going to redo the survey

Maura Magoarty: If we accept the conclusion of the survey is that now the guiding principles?

Brian Packish: Yes – we put out the survey – the people answered – they gathered the responses and put together the summary.

*FYI: The survey is now available on the town website if you wish to read it.*

Muara McGroatry: The Marketing conclusions: Where did the money get spent  
What types of business (potential)? Are we doing this for grant money?  
Are you accepting the conclusions of the survey?

ALL: NO it is to keep the spending in town. Add more restaurants stores, etc.

Brian Packish: Accept the results of the survey – 542 surveys. Accept the public visioning process an outline of what we did on July 23<sup>rd</sup>.

At this time the priority is that we are all still in line with the calibrated goals of the Downtown Street Scape Master Plan (because that is what is driving where they are trying to lead us with this).

Everybody Take the time to review the calibrated goals personally

- Create a North Bluff Plan to improve ferry logistics
- Increase safety and capitalize on waterfront public space
- Develop Circuit Ave Extension
- Improve and enlarge Circuit/Kennebec Ave pedestrian experience while providing a net parking median within a five minute walk
- Preserving parking near convenience businesses

- Strengthen linkages between Kennebec, Circuit, North Bluff, the Camp Meeting Association, CMA, public restrooms and Ocean Park
- Improve the SSA ferry arrival welcome experience
- Recommend consistent Streetscape materials plantings and furnishings to make the downtown more inviting and true to Oak Bluffs unique character
- Investigate opportunities to incorporate green street principle
- Incorporate universal design principles to accommodate people of all abilities

Should we add – delete – expand?

- Erik Albert: Thinks there should be something about “bicyclist” experience.
- Chuck Sullivan Accessibility areas
- John Brandford State and Federal funding to incorporate universal design principles
- Chuch Sullivan You can make it better, more accessible – rebuilding of sidewalks to accommodate more business
- Brian Packish: Yes, we can add bicycles. Bicycles are big - use and non-use  
You can’t legally stop them from riding on Circuit Avenue  
What would you like to specifically speak to about bicycles?
- Erik Albert A goal to make the bicycling experience more accommodating
- Bob Whritenour The Bike Ways Committee create Shared Use Paths (“SUP”) to connect communities. Some things are not feasible. SUP into downtown – have a SUP area – park your bike and walk around – then return to the SUP area
- Brian Packish The state made a presentation about bike paths, from the drawbridge comes up Eastville to New York Ave and ends at Sunset Lake, however not till 2017. Also a Bike Path from Tony’s Market to DCA is planned
- Amy Billings Way Finding is key (huge). Committees must coordinate with each other– the Committee should coordinate with the Parks Commissioner because there are overlaps; that SUP is going to end in the park.
- Brian Packish Big piece is way finding – but how do we manage it. Create the areas and allow people to access the locations prior to arriving in the area or town using electronic media app’s, etc.

Next item on the list is to select a ‘Way Finding Sub-Committee, etc. How many people? Erik mentioned an interest along with Rhonda.

Perhaps invite Stephanie Mashek and Ken Maclean who attended the last meeting offered some valuable information.

Bob Whritenour The Calibrated Goals may be too limiting. No flexibility for Way Finding. Yes, strengthening the linkages is important, but there is nothing about how we can possibly go out of the box and discuss communication, electronic components, etc. Not too specific

Brian Packish Based on public feedback and I discussed this with J Ford. He feels this is just a starting point, a baseline to expand upon and process as many times as necessary, (within reason). This is a beginning.

Bob Whritenour The overall community development function, the focus may fall on private property – alleyways, etc. I like the idea of making the downtown more inviting and true to OB character, but it is not just sidewalks and plantings. Is it possible to identify where we can apply for funds to get the facade done or cleanup...leave that open.

Brian Packish We will cover it stating, *if there is money we want it!* A possible discussion with Alice Boyd: Identify grant applications. Are there requirements we need to meet and prepare for in a timely manner.

Amy Billings: Oak Bluffs Preliminary Goals

- Make the downtown more conducive to pedestrians/bicycle activity
- Make the downtown more inviting enhancing the uniqueness of Oak Bluffs
- Recommended street furnishings to soften the urban hardscape
- Increase walkability and create safe strong linkages
- Investigate opportunities to incorporate green street principles
- Incorporate universal design principles to accommodate people of all abilities
- Create platforms to enable and empower the community

They are basically covering what we are saying – not much more

Bob Whritenour At this point we should stay broad but also within the reality of what our issues are with a catch all statement.

Chuck Sullivan Signage, electronic apps, consistent sidewalk and a variety of different means

Brian Packish I think that strengthening linkages is so broad and so vague – we can definitely *add in* through other community development opportunities

John Bradford Say All ferry arrivals not just SSA

Doug Abdelnour New Google Map has all ferry's coming and going but has the Rhode Island ferry leaving from the Harbor Master's shack. Signage is important to direct people to what, where and when

Maura Mcroarty Why is the Steamship Authority specifically mentioned?

Chuch Sullivan  
/ALL *State Funded*

Maura Mcroarty (member of the Bike ...Committee)  
It is important – get bikes as close as you can – have sign like ED to direct bikes to where to turn to avoid downtown. OB a little more difficult - so many ways into downtown, important to have signage just outside the entrance to downtown.

John Bradford I think *The Improve the SSA Ferry Arrival Welcoming Experience* became an individual item simply because travelers upon arrival don't know where to go or what to do

Brian Packish Take SSA and ferry out and just state  
*Improve transportation arrival welcoming experience*  
The limitation is the one that states SSA

Bob Whritenour Need a specific plan for the SSA – may be something we can handout to them. Articulate what we are looking for from the Steamship Authority to support our community development efforts

Bob Whritenour Good idea no trouble with the SSA, they have a beautiful facility they bring more and more people. If you take a look at every single other port assistance they do whether it is parking, park & rides or the huge map they have in Tisbury. We have none of that. We have never asked them for anything.

Brian Packing We should explore the use of the “embarkation fee” distribution which currently being used up by one department.

Bob Whritenour The state law dictates its use as “public safety”. Let's try to focus on what we want – worry about money. Figure out what we're looking.

Brian Packish We are good with the calibrated goals and we will leave as *Improve the SSA ferry arrival welcoming experience* basically with motivation to break out as own item to approach the SSA for funding.

The other ferries seemed to be included in number one *create a North Bluff plan to improve ferry logistics, increase safety and capitalize on waterfront public space* which is basically our harbor.

- John Bradford      The North Bluff plan, etc. “ferry logistics” can we **add** welcoming experience there too.
- Motion:              John Bradford made a motion to accept the Calibrated Goals as amended (corrections and additions)
- Second:              Erik Albert
- Vote:                  9-0-0
- Brian Packish:      Next item on the list is number three – a little more discussion on the Way Finding Sub Committee. Any thoughts on how many people that should be?
- Erik Albert          Discussion:  
How many people?              3 – 7 – 10  
Will they all attend?
- Brian Packish      Does it have to be someone on a committee? Looking for people outside of the committee. I know Greg, Erik as Stephanie. How do we want to approach? Facebook post, looking for people? Someone interested submit a letter of Interest to Shelley at the Selectman’s office. Contact Kerry Scott, someone from Friends of OB Jim Westervelt. Stephanie would be great for her design abilities.
- Doug Abdelnour    Critical to have someone who sees the problems on a day to day basis like someone from the Island Queen
- Erik Albert          Talked to David from the Rhode Island Fast Ferry and Phillip
- Some of these people can come in on an advisory capacity and do not need to attend every meeting.
- Brian Packish      Need to know who and how many are interested? I understand the merit of more for input and having enough people to have a discussion.
- Bill Giordano      Will gladly come to meetings and give my input, but can’t dedicate time to commit the time required.
- Doug Abdelnour    Business owners who are closing down for the season, may have more input and time to commit
- Brian Packish      Bob will add to his update (BOS) obtain lists

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Erik add to his post  
Shelley and Brian to email John Ford asking for his list from Harborfest  
and Union Chapel  
Facebook

- Amy Billings Can you explain what Way-Finding means, some people do not understand what it means?
- Brian Packish We are looking for a group of six to ten people to assist the Street Scape Committee specifically on the Way Finding portion of the process
- Christine Flynn Is there a deadline?
- Brian Packish Yes, consider by the next Streetscape scheduled meeting.  
We will not change the time of the meeting at this time.
- Maura McGroarty Most people can't attend during working hours – alternate meetings (night and day meetings)
- Brian Packish We do understand and when we get more specific we will address alternating the meeting time.
- Brian Packish Agenda for our next meeting:  
Selection of the Way Finding Sub-Committee  
Calibrated Goals
- Next Monday, September 29, 2014 at 1:00 will be our next meeting. Send out emails and see who we get.
- Erik Albert Also mention at the BOS meeting that tomorrow is Clean-Up Oak Bluffs Day. Meet at the Info booth @ Farley Square bring gloves, rakes, brooms, etc.*
- Amy Billings: Time frame for the completion of this project? My priority is new sidewalks.
- Bob Whritenour Finish by this Fall and February is the deadline for applications (Grants) so we should still shoot to finish
- Brian Packish Agenda do you want specific items need to have definitive discussion and the deadline is February but you have to write a grant and that takes times.
- Bob Whritenour Need to figure out what are we looking for, a project for Circuit Ave Extension or sidewalks for Circuit Avenue

Chuck Sullivan Just talked about the third one on the calibrated goals but goals but isn't it one and two. Four five six and seven all fall under one and two. Doing one and two – what this town needs more than anything North Bluff more important than CA or CA more important than NB... I don't think putting up signs for Way Finding makes any sense if you are going to tear up sidewalks in three years.

Brian Packish Set out in front of us what we are going to work on give people the opportunity to chime in knowing what to expect.

John Bradford Is it possible to get Alice Boyd give some idea of time frame for grants?

Amy Billings to prioritize.

Bob Whitenour We need more work on the goals and then work on info for grants.

Brian Packish We should set out next meeting Agenda and specify what we will discuss.  
Continue discussion on the Calibrated Goals

- Create a North Bluff Plan to improve ferry logistics and welcome experience as added
- Increase safety and capitalize on waterfront public safety

Chuck Sullivan Yes specify area to discuss and people attend as interested. John's point is a good one – find out what grant money is out there in order to obtain funds.

Brian Packish Master Plan Document must be completed to submit grant

Bob Whrittenour Alice told him up at DHCD there's tremendous talk about OB. We've got their ear big time and she said they are looking at us very favorably. What we have to do is come up with this downtown plan. We can absolutely incorporate her in, as we development this we are gearing ourselves toward what might be needed.

John Bradford Can we adopt something then amend as we add other projects

Amy Billings Meeting wise do section by section. North Bluff then Circuit Ave. Going to get public input – having a meeting on total project will be too much and will end up jumping all over

Brian Packish Some things may be specific to North Bluff, but sidewalks are needed in North Bluff and Circuit Avenue and there will be things that overlap.

John Bradford Talking major traffic changes in the North Bluff

Christine Flynn      Having the Comprehensive Plan – focusing and finishing is a priority and then focus on the implementation and Grant writing is secondary. We should be aware, but it is preliminary and we are not in a position yet.

Bill Giordano      As far as grants, the North Bluff should be a priority because work is planned for there already through a previous grant.

Brian Packish      Great plan, but timeline seems to have changed a bit.

Bob Whritenour      The project is to replace that North Bluff Seawall and to top with a timber pedestrian boardwalk that goes from the harbor to the Steamship.

Bill Giordano      Can Streetscape Master Plan and North Bluff Boardwalk and Seawall be combined?

Bob Whritenour      The boardwalk is fixed, some opportunities is the final landscaping for the project. The brick and clay bathhouse is located a small park there is going to extend an additional 20 feet seawall by about 40 feet in length makes a large park like area. How that fits into all of these goals is what we need to determine.

John Bradford      Are you going to put the North Bluff on next week’s Agenda?

Brian Packish      We start with Calibrated Goals?

Bob Whritenour      It’s a good project delayed – gives us an opportunity to get people involved in the landscaping aspect I’m not completely convinced we’ve got that right.

Can Chris Siedell get us a 2 x 3 version of this plan.

Erik Albert      Facebook page Street Scape and the Harbor Cleanup “OB DOWNTOWN” It is a disgrace if you ask me.

I post a picture and received some negative feedback. There’s also Erik’s Corner where I am talking freely – open forum. You can post too. Open forum you can do your own blog, do what you want

I am also on Facebook - Brian Ewell and Erik. There are three of us from the Planning Board on Facebook.

The public views positively or negatively the comments on the page. Be mindful the public views and gets a sense of the positivity and negativity of the project. Perception is reality – depends on the reader(s) interception. Not designed to offend, designed to give a hands on tangible result.

Erik Albert Encourage everyone to come out – wear a white shirt I have fun cleaning up.

Finish my point, you deleted my stuff; two Erik's Corners which is totally out of line, totally inappropriate. No discussion - no phone call. You can counter but you deleted Erik's Corner that's my opinion.

Doug Abdelnour Trying to keep the peace the goals are bigger than that.

Brian Packish Yes, the goals are bigger than that.

Erik Albert Let's agree you don't delete Erik's corner

Brian Packish I agree you and I have a discussion about it. How's that.

Brian Packish

NO CLOSING

Meeting adjourned @ 2:25 PM